



St Peter's School YORK

Policy on Special Educational Needs and Learning Difficulties

St Peter's School, York

June 2024

(Next review – Summer term 2026)

I **Policy statement and aims**

- 1.1 **The School:** St Peter's School, York comprises of St Peter's 2-8 (for pupils aged 2 to 8 years), St Peter's 8-13 (for pupils aged 8 to 13 years) and St Peter's 13-18 (for pupils aged 13 to 18 years), collectively referred to in this policy as the School unless otherwise stated. The School is a mainstream independent school that accepts boys and girls from the age two years.
- 1.2 **Aims:** The aims of this policy are:
- 1.2.1 to promote good practice in our detection, support and management of special educational needs;
 - 1.2.2 to explain the support we can provide for children who have learning difficulties and the co-operation we will need from parents; and
 - 1.2.3 to actively promote the well-being of pupils.
- 1.3 This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format, if required.

2 **"Special educational needs" and "learning difficulty"**

- 2.1 Children's needs and requirements fall into four broad areas of need: communication and interaction; cognition and learning; social, emotional and mental health; and physical and/or sensory needs.
- 2.2 Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.
- 2.3 Children have a learning difficulty if they:
- 2.3.1 have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
 - 2.3.2 have a disability which prevents or hinders the child from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post 16 institutions (The School's Disability Policy is available on request from the School Office);
 - 2.3.3 are under five and fall within the definition at 2.3.1 or 2.3.2 above or are likely to do so do when of compulsory school age if special educational provision was not made for the child.
- 2.4 A child must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the *language or (form of language) in which they are or will be taught is different from a language (or form of language) which is or has been spoken at home* (section 20 (4) Children and Families Act 2014). However, children for whom English is an additional language, and whose ability to learn is, therefore impeded, will be provided with appropriate support provided they meet the School's academic criteria. Please refer to the School's policy for pupils with English as an additional language.
- 2.5 A child who finds a particular subject difficult does not necessarily have a "learning difficulty" in the legal sense of that expression; there will often be disparities in the speed with which children learn, in their skill at solving problems and in their general acumen.

- 2.6 The expression "learning difficulty" covers a wide variety of conditions including those stemming from a cognitive or medical weakness.
- 2.7 Learning difficulties may affect children regardless of IQ and academic ability. Sometimes a child's learning difficulty becomes apparent as they get older, when the educational pressures tend to increase.

3 **Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo)**

- 3.1 **SENCO:** The SENCos have responsibility for:
- 3.1.1 ensuring liaison with parents and other professionals in respect of a child's special educational needs;
 - 3.1.2 advising and supporting other staff in the School;
 - 3.1.3 ensuring that any Learning Support Register, chart of Learning Support Progression and Learning Support Plans are in place and implemented effectively;
 - 3.1.4 ensuring that relevant background information about individual children with special education needs is collected, recorded and updated;
 - 3.1.5 undertaking any other appropriate duties in accordance with the Code of Practice on special educational needs.

4 **Implementation and procedures**

- 4.1 **Provision:** The provision which we can make for children who appear to have a learning difficulty includes: support within subjects, booster groups, additional specialist teaching and internal specialist assessment. If required we will advise specialist assessment or support from external agencies.
- 4.2 **Code of Practice:** The School's approach to the detection and management of learning difficulties will be guided by the *Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years* (DFE - 0000205-2013), Department for Education (DfE), January 2015 (**Code**), or any substituting or amending code of practice issued from time to time by the Department for Education (**DfE**).
- 4.3 **Group support:** If test results and/or teacher assessment indicate that there may be a difficulty with learning but the circumstances are not such as to indicate an immediate formal assessment or a course of additional specialist teaching, the School may suggest that a child attends a small learning support group which will support the areas of weakness identified and will be appropriate to the age of the child. The child's progress and needs will be monitored and, if necessary, the School will recommend a formal assessment if progress is not evident.
- 4.4 **Outcome of tests:** If the outcome of a test or any other circumstances give the School reason to think that a child may have a learning difficulty, they will report and consult with parents as necessary and make recommendations.
- 4.5 **Formal assessment:** If test results indicate that a child may have a learning difficulty or disability which ought to be assessed without delay, the School will ask the parents to agree to their child being formally assessed by an educational psychologist or other appropriate specialist (for example, a clinical psychologist). They may consult an educational psychologist, or other specialist - from a list retained by the School, or one of their own choice. The cost must be borne by the parents. The School will ask the parents to agree to

follow the advice of the specialists unless there are persuasive reasons to the contrary. The Head of Learning Support will work with teaching staff to determine which recommendations are appropriate for the stage and age of the child within the St Peter's school setting and will then prioritise these for implementation when necessary.

- 4.6 **Additional specialist teaching:** The School may suggest some additional input on a 1-1 or group basis. This will be delivered by Heads of Learning Support, teaching assistants or teachers and will be timetabled to take into account the child's needs and age.
- 4.7 Parents who believe that their child may have a learning disability must discuss this first with the school SENCo before requesting a specialist assessment through a specialist assessor. For formal examinations, for an application for an examination access arrangement to be made in accordance with the Joint Council for Qualifications, Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties 7.5.1. the school SENCo must provide the assessor with a history of need indicating that an assessment is justified.
- 4.8 **Examinations:** Children who have been diagnosed as having a learning difficulty or medical condition (including dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD or ASD for example) may be eligible to apply for an Access Arrangement (additional help or support) to complete internal examinations and public examinations. It is necessary for the School to demonstrate a 'history of need', evidence of the child's normal way of working, and in most cases this must be supported by assessment data, the results of which satisfy JCQ regulations. Parents are asked to liaise with the School regarding their concerns in good time with respect to this, as applications (particularly for public examinations) are an extensive process requiring a wide range of evidence to be gathered by the School SENCo. For public examinations this should be by the preceding October at the latest.
- 4.9 **The Learning Support Register:** The SENCo will ensure that an appropriate Learning Support Register and relevant information regarding the pupils needs, is in place and regularly updated and shared with teaching staff as appropriate. This will be prepared in consultation with the parents and, if appropriate, the pupil and may include:
- 4.9.1 the adjustments, interventions and support required to meet the outcomes identified for the pupil;
- 4.9.2 clear dates for review.
- 4.9.3 In carrying out the review the SENCo will consider:
- (a) the effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress;
 - (b) the views of relevant teaching staff, the parents and, if appropriate, the pupil; and
 - (c) any changes that are required to the support and outcomes set out for the pupil.
- 4.10 **Education Health and Care plans (EHC plan):** Parents and the School have the right under section 36(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014 to ask the local authority to make an assessment with a view to drawing up an EHC plan. The School will always consult with parents before exercising this right. If the local authority refuses to make an assessment, the parents (but not the School) have a right of appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Health Education and Social Care).

- 4.11 Where a prospective pupil has an EHC plan, the School will consult the parents and, where appropriate, the local authority to ensure that the provision specified in the EHC plan can be delivered by the School. The School will co-operate with the local authority to ensure that relevant reviews of EHC plans are carried out as required.
- 4.12 Any additional services that are needed to meet the requirements of the EHC plan will need to be charged to the local authority if the authority is responsible for the fees and the School is named in Section I of the EHC plan. In all other circumstances charges will be made directly to parents unless the additional services can be considered to be a "reasonable adjustment" where no charge will be made, in accordance with the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

5 Information sharing and parent involvement

- 5.1 **Information:** Parents must inform the School at the point of applying for a place, if they know of any special educational needs which their child may have. Parents must also provide the School with a copy of any report or recommendations which have been made in relation to special educational needs at the child's previous school or.
- 5.2 **Concerns:** The School need to know immediately if a child's progress causes their parents concern so that they can devise and agree a strategy with the parents.
- 5.3 **Consultation:** The School will do all that is reasonable to report and consult with parents about their child's learning difficulties and to ensure that teachers are given any necessary information about a child's learning difficulties and that teaching practices are appropriate.

6 Alternative welfare needs

- 6.1 **Welfare needs:** The School recognises that pupils with special educational needs or learning difficulties are at greater risk of developing mental health difficulties and may be at risk of being bullied. The School has an anti-bullying policy which makes it clear that bullying behaviour of any kind is not acceptable and will be taken very seriously. If parents are concerned about their child's welfare they can approach the pupil's class teacher / mentor / House Master / Mistress to discuss their concerns in private at any time.
- 6.2 **Additional barriers:** Additional barriers can exist when detecting the abuse or neglect of pupils with a special educational need or disability creating additional safeguarding challenges for those involved in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of this group of children. The School is mindful in particular that:
- 6.2.1 assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the pupil's special educational need or disability without further exploration;
- 6.2.2 pupils with a special education need or disability can be disproportionately impacted by bullying without outwardly showing any signs; and
- 6.2.3 there may be communication barriers which are difficult to overcome to identify whether action under this policy is required.

Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures set out in the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

- 6.3 **Disability:** The School recognises that some pupils with special education needs or learning difficulties may also have a disability. Pupils and parents are referred to the School's Disability Policy. The School will make all reasonable adjustments in order to afford

opportunity to disabled pupils. However if, despite such adjustments, the School is unable to provide adequately for the pupil's needs, the School may decline to offer a place to a pupil or request you withdraw your child from the School (see 7.1 below).

7 **Alternative arrangements**

7.1 **Withdrawal:** The School reserves the right, following consultation with parents, to ask or require parents to withdraw their child from the School if, in their opinion after **making all reasonable adjustments:**

7.1.1 the child is in need of a formal assessment, additional specialist teaching, learning support or medication to which parents do not consent; and / or

7.1.2 parents have withheld information from the School which, had the information been provided, would have made a significant difference to the School's management of the child's learning difficulties; and / or

7.1.3 the child's learning difficulties require a level of support or medication which, in the professional judgment of the Head, the School is unable to provide, manage or arrange;

7.1.4 the child has special educational needs that make it unlikely they will be able to benefit sufficiently from the mainstream education and facilities which the School provides.

7.2 **Alternative placement:** In any of these circumstances the School will do what is reasonable to help parents to find an alternative placement which will provide the child with the necessary level of teaching and support.

7.3 **Financial:** Withdrawal of a pupil in these circumstances will not incur a charge to fees in lieu of notice. The deposit paid in respect of the child will be credited to the parents' account.

8 **Training**

8.1 The School ensures that regular guidance and training is arranged on induction and at regular intervals thereafter so that staff and volunteers understand what is expected of them by this policy and have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles.

8.2 The level and frequency of training depends on role of the individual member of staff.

8.3 The School maintains written records of all staff training.

9 **Record keeping**

9.1 All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the School's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.

Authorised by	The Board of Governors June 2024
Next Review	Summer Term 2026